



General Assembly

January Session, 2003

Raised Bill No. 967

LCO No. 3437

Referred to Committee on Program Review and Investigations

Introduced by:
(PRI)

***AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE
LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM REVIEW AND INVESTIGATIONS
COMMITTEE RELATIVE TO THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE BOARD
OF EDUCATION AND SERVICES FOR THE BLIND.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 10-293 of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2003*):

3 (a) The Board of Education and Services for the Blind shall consist of
4 seven members. The Commissioner of Social Services shall be a
5 member, ex officio. The other six members, two of whom shall be blind
6 persons, shall be appointed by the Governor, and each shall be a
7 resident of this state. The Governor may, for reasonable cause, remove
8 any appointive member and appoint another person to fill the vacancy
9 for the unexpired portion of the term. Said board shall meet annually
10 in the month of September and may meet at any other time upon the
11 call of [its director] the Commissioner of Social Services; and the
12 [director] commissioner shall call a meeting at the request of two
13 members. Any appointed member who fails to attend three
14 consecutive meetings or fifty per cent of all meetings held during any

15 calendar year shall be deemed to have resigned. A majority of the
16 members in office shall constitute a quorum. The board shall adopt
17 rules for its own action and regulations for determining what persons
18 shall receive benefits under the provisions of this chapter.

19 (b) The Board of Education and Services for the Blind shall be
20 within the Department of Social Services, [for administrative purposes
21 only.]

22 Sec. 2. Section 10-294 of the general statutes is repealed and the
23 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2003*):

24 [The Governor shall appoint an executive director of the board in
25 accordance with the provisions of section 4-9a. The compensation of
26 said director shall be determined in the manner provided in section 4-
27 40.] No member of the board shall receive compensation for services
28 rendered unless such services are special and specially requested by
29 the board, in which case a moderate allowance may be made for the
30 time actually spent. The certificate of the [director] Commissioner of
31 Social Services of the amount of any bill for such services and expenses
32 shall be sufficient warrant to the Comptroller for the payment of the
33 same.

34 Sec. 3. Subsection (b) of section 10-294b of the general statutes is
35 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July*
36 *1, 2003*):

37 (b) Said advisory council shall consist of the following members: (1)
38 The Commissioner of Education or the commissioner's designee; (2)
39 [the executive director of the Board of Education and Services for the
40 Blind or said director's designee] the Commissioner of Social Services,
41 or the commissioner's designee; (3) one representative of the National
42 Federation of the Blind of Connecticut, appointed by the president pro
43 tempore of the Senate; (4) one teacher of visually impaired children
44 employed by the Board of Education and Services for the Blind,
45 appointed by the majority leader of the Senate; (5) one teacher of

46 visually impaired children employed by a local education agency,
47 appointed by the minority leader of the Senate; (6) one public school
48 administrator, appointed by the speaker of the House of
49 Representatives; (7) one visually impaired public high school student
50 who reads and writes braille, appointed by the majority leader of the
51 House of Representatives; (8) one representative of the Connecticut
52 Council of the Blind, appointed by the minority leader of the House of
53 Representatives; and (9) one parent of a visually impaired child of
54 school age enrolled in a public school, appointed by the Governor.

55 Sec. 4. Subsection (a) of section 10-295 of the general statutes is
56 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July*
57 *1, 2003*):

58 (a) All residents of this state, regardless of age, who, because of
59 blindness or impaired vision, require special educational programs, on
60 the signed recommendation of the [director of the Board of Education
61 and Services for the Blind] Commissioner of Social Services, shall be
62 entitled to receive such instruction and for such length of time as is
63 deemed expedient by said [director] commissioner. The [director]
64 commissioner shall annually submit to the board the list of names of
65 persons so recommended. Upon the petition of any parent or guardian
66 of a blind educable child or a child with impaired vision, a local board
67 of education may provide such instruction within the town or it may
68 provide for such instruction by agreement with other towns as
69 provided in subsection (d) of section 10-76d. The expense of such
70 instruction shall be paid by the state to an amount not exceeding six
71 thousand four hundred dollars for each of such persons in any one
72 state fiscal year. When the parents or guardians of any such blind
73 person or person with impaired vision are not able to provide clothing
74 for such person, an additional sum not to exceed one hundred dollars
75 per year may be allowed for such expenses. Where a local or regional
76 board of education reimburses parents or legal guardians of a blind or
77 visually impaired child for transportation to and from a specialized
78 residential facility serving the blind, such board shall be reimbursed by

79 the state for such validated actual cost up to a maximum of three
 80 hundred dollars per pupil per school year. Determination of
 81 reimbursable transportation costs and payment therefor shall be the
 82 responsibility of the State Board of Education and Services for the
 83 Blind. All educational privileges prescribed in part V of chapter 164,
 84 not inconsistent with the provisions of this chapter, shall apply to the
 85 pupils covered by this subsection. The Board of Education and
 86 Services for the Blind may provide any of the educational services
 87 described in this section to a child whose vision may be greater than as
 88 defined in section 10-294a upon written referral by the local or regional
 89 board of education responsible for providing special education and
 90 related services pursuant to section 10-76d. A request from a local or
 91 regional board of education for reimbursement of such expenses to the
 92 Board of Education and Services for the Blind shall not be eligible for
 93 such reimbursement unless such request is received by the first of June
 94 for such expenses incurred during the preceding first of July through
 95 the thirty-first of December and by the first of December for expenses
 96 incurred during the preceding first of January through the thirtieth of
 97 June.

98 Sec. 5. Section 10-296 of the general statutes is repealed and the
 99 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2003*):

100 The [director] Commissioner of Social Services may, within the
 101 expenditure therefor provided in section 10-295, as amended by this
 102 act, contract with public or private institutions, individuals or private
 103 enterprises having facilities for the instruction of the blind, for the
 104 education, board and keep of blind persons who are bona fide
 105 residents of this state found by the [director] commissioner to be fitted
 106 for such instruction. Said [director] commissioner may compel
 107 attendance of any blind child, until such child attains the age of sixteen
 108 years, at an institution providing instruction as defined in this section;
 109 and, if the parents or guardians of such child do not assent thereto, on
 110 the application of the [director] commissioner the court of probate of
 111 the district wherein such child resides shall, after investigation and

112 after reasonable notice to the parents or guardians of such child of the
113 time and place of hearing upon such application, inquire further into
114 the facts and, if such court finds action warranted, it shall issue an
115 order as to the attendance of such child at a school or an institution
116 deemed most suitable for his instruction.

117 Sec. 6. Section 10-297 of the general statutes is repealed and the
118 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2003*):

119 The [director] Commissioner of Social Services is authorized to aid
120 in securing employment for capable blind or partially blind persons in
121 industrial and mercantile establishments and in other positions which
122 offer financial returns. Said [director] commissioner may aid needy
123 blind persons in such way as said [director] commissioner deems
124 expedient, expending for such purpose such sum as the General
125 Assembly appropriates, provided the maximum expenditure for any
126 one person shall not exceed the sum of nine hundred and sixty dollars
127 in a fiscal year, but, if said maximum amount is insufficient to furnish
128 necessary medical or hospital treatment to a beneficiary, said [director]
129 commissioner may authorize payment of such additional costs as [he]
130 the commissioner deems necessary and reasonable.

131 Sec. 7. Section 10-297a of the general statutes is repealed and the
132 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2003*):

133 The [executive director of the Board of Education and Services for
134 the Blind] Commissioner of Social Services may make grants, within
135 available appropriations, to the Connecticut Radio Information
136 Service, Inc., for the purchase of receivers and for costs related to the
137 operation of said service.

138 Sec. 8. Section 17b-2 of the general statutes is repealed and the
139 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2003*):

140 The Department of Social Services is designated as the state agency
141 for the administration of (1) the child care development block grant

142 pursuant to the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990;
 143 (2) the Connecticut energy assistance program pursuant to the Low
 144 Income Home Energy Assistance Act of 1981; (3) programs for the
 145 elderly pursuant to the Older Americans Act; (4) the state plan for
 146 vocational rehabilitation services for the fiscal year ending June 30,
 147 1994; (5) the refugee assistance program pursuant to the Refugee Act of
 148 1980; (6) the legalization impact assistance grant program pursuant to
 149 the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986; (7) the temporary
 150 assistance for needy families program pursuant to the Personal
 151 Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996; (8)
 152 the Medicaid program pursuant to Title XIX of the Social Security Act;
 153 (9) the food stamp program pursuant to the Food Stamp Act of 1977;
 154 (10) the state supplement to the Supplemental Security Income
 155 Program pursuant to the Social Security Act; (11) the state child
 156 support enforcement plan pursuant to Title IV-D of the Social Security
 157 Act; [and] (12) the state social services plan for the implementation of
 158 the social services block grants and community services block grants
 159 pursuant to the Social Security Act; and (13) programs and services
 160 implemented by the Board of Education and Services for the Blind
 161 pursuant to chapter 174. The Department of Social Services is
 162 designated a public housing agency for the purpose of administering
 163 the Section 8 existing certificate program and the housing voucher
 164 program pursuant to the Housing Act of 1937.

This act shall take effect as follows:	
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2003</i>
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2003</i>
Sec. 3	<i>July 1, 2003</i>
Sec. 4	<i>July 1, 2003</i>
Sec. 5	<i>July 1, 2003</i>
Sec. 6	<i>July 1, 2003</i>
Sec. 7	<i>July 1, 2003</i>
Sec. 8	<i>July 1, 2003</i>

Statement of Purpose:

To establish that the functions, powers, duties and obligations, of the Board of Education and Services for the Blind shall be within the Department of Social Services, and eliminate the designation that said Board is within the Department of Social Services for administrative purposes only.

[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]